

# CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ESTABLISHED APRIL 15, 1870

WALTER M. DICKIE, M.D., Director

## Weekly Bulletin



APR 4 - 1940  
University of California

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Entered as second-class matter February 21, 1922, at the post office at Sacramento, California, under the Act of August 24, 1912.  
Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917.

Vol. XIX, No. 8

March 16, 1940

GUY P. JONES  
EDITOR

## Accidents Due to Blasting Caps

J. P. RUSSELL, M.D., Chief Industrial Hygiene Service

A number of children are crippled or blinded and some are killed each year as a result of blasting cap explosions. Most of these accidents occur in rural and suburban areas. They increase in frequency during the spring months and reach a maximum in July and August.

In an effort to prevent these tragic and avoidable accidents the Institute of Makers of Explosives is conducting a safety campaign, in cooperation with public health officials and safety organizations, to acquaint the public, particularly parents, teachers, and others having children in their care, with the dangers of playing with blasting caps.

These caps are detonators used for firing high explosives, such as dynamite. They are loaded with a very sensitive and powerful explosive. One type, which is a small metal cylinder, closed at one end, and usually made of copper, is designed to be exploded by sparks from a fuse. Another type, known as an electric blasting cap, has wires attached at one end. A small amount of electric current, such as that supplied by an ordinary flashlight battery, is sufficient to explode a cap of this type. Therefore, the wires from an electric blasting cap may not be connected to any source of electric current without the danger of exploding. Both types are also sensitive to blows, and to heat applied to the metal cylinder.

Blasting caps often get into the hands of children

through the carelessness of workmen, who may leave them lying around after blasting operations, or may carry them home and leave them where they can be found by children.

Accident records show that most blasting cap accidents result from the caps being struck with a hammer or stone. Any blasting cap will explode if it is hit with sufficient force by such an instrument. Blasting cap explosions are often caused by holding lighted matches to the caps, or picking out the explosive with a pin or nail.

Children, and others inexperienced with explosives, should not touch these detonators. Many accidents from this source may be prevented by warning children "Don't play with blasting caps; they are loaded with a powerful explosive. Don't hit them with a hammer or a stone. Don't throw them in fires. If you see one, don't touch it, but report it to the nearest policeman, or your parents."

### BRAWLEY JOINS IMPERIAL COUNTY HEALTH UNIT

The city of Brawley on March 1st transferred the administration of its public health affairs to the Imperial County Health Department, of which Dr. Warren F. Fox is health officer.

Dr. J. L. Parker has served as city health officer of Brawley for many years.



### LOS ANGELES COUNTY SENDS BIRTH NOTIFICATIONS

During the last 21 months 25,101 notifications of birth registration have been mailed from the office of the Los Angeles County Department of Health, Dr. J. L. Pomeroy, health officer. A tabulation of experiences with these mailings has been made by Robert G. Webster, Chief of the Division of Vital Records.

Great care is taken by district deputy registrars in checking, and, if indicated, verifying mailing addresses, and only 487, or 1.9 per cent, of the total were returned because of undeliverable addresses. Interest stimulated in birth registration is evidenced by the receipt of 457 individual requests for notices concerning births of children born prior to the time when mailing of notifications was begun. From these requests a few unregistered cases were found.

There were 634, or 2.5 per cent, of the total notifications returned for correction after the parents noticed certain errors in the information as given on the birth certificates. It was possible to make corrections on the original certificates in 64.4 per cent of these cases, since this proportion of the corrections were received in the county office before the certificates were forwarded to the state.

California laws provide for the correction of certificates by affidavit after they have been filed with the state; two notarized signatures are required. Out of a total of 226 cases in Los Angeles County wherein affidavits were carefully prepared and returned to the parents, with full instructions for signatures, only 100 were completed and returned. Therefore, nearly 20 per cent of the cases where errors were disclosed remain uncorrected because of the failure of the parents to return the affidavits. A follow-up post card notice is being sent to these parents urging them to complete the correction procedure.

### BEWARE OF POISONOUS FUNGI

At this season of the year, mushroom hunters are likely to mistake a variety of fungus for an edible mushroom. During this, the latter part of the growing season, many poisonous varieties of fungi are found under shrubs and trees.

A San Francisco collector of fungi recently discovered 25 pounds of a pale variety of *amanita muscaria*, which is a clean, attractive appearing plant, peels readily, has no bad odor or taste, and does not blacken silver in the cooking process, but which is deadly poison. It is safer to be sure that a fungus is edible than to take a chance with eating one of the poisonous varieties.

### FLOODED WELLS MAY BE DISINFECTED

Unusually heavy rainfall has brought flood conditions to many communities of California, particularly in the northern sections of the state. Many health officers in such communities have issued instructions, to local residents, that require the boiling of drinking water. This is regarded generally as a good precautionary measure. It is probable that wells that have not actually been flooded are as safe as they were before the high water came. Wherever there is any question, however, relative to the purity of well water, the supply can be disinfected, according to the instructions that follow. After flood waters have fallen, flooded wells should be pumped thoroughly until the water is clear for additional safety. The following procedure for disinfection may be taken:

1. Add to the well one can (12 oz.) chloride of lime or one quart of any household disinfectant containing chlorine such as Clorox, Sani-Clor, Purex, et cetera.
2. Allow well to stand idle over night.
3. Pump out well again until odor and taste of chlorine disappear.

### CONVENTION OF WESTERN HOSPITALS

The Fourteenth Annual Convention of Western Hospitals will be held at the Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles, April 8 to 11, 1940. The County and State Hospital Section of the association will hold its annual meeting at that time. A program for that day has been arranged by the superintendents of the Fairmont Hospital, Alameda County, Olive View Sanitarium, Los Angeles County and Orange County Hospital. The program will cover such subjects as the determination of proper standards for public hospital service, number of nursing hours per patient day in county hospitals, reciprocity between counties in the handling of emergency cases, dietetic survey with regard to unmet needs in government hospitals, increasing requirements for resident physician training and the effects upon public hospitals, personnel problems and other pertinent subjects.

The principal address will be given by Fred G. Carter, M.D., President of the American Hospital Association, who will speak upon the subject "The Place of the Public Hospital in the Proposed Health Security Act of 1940."

While a child is acquiring an education he should be doing things he will have to do while he is earning a living.—H. Ford.



### SEMINAR ON MILK ANNOUNCED

The U. S. Public Health Service, in collaboration with the Washington State Department of Public Health and the Seattle Health Department, will hold a seminar in the public health control of milk supplies at Seattle April 15 to 20, 1940. This is the eleventh seminar for state and local milk sanitarians to be held, as a result of a recommendation of the Committee on Milk of the Conference of State and Provincial Health Authorities. Following are some of the subjects that will be discussed at this seminar:

How milk supplies are contaminated by various disease organisms.

The history of milk-borne disease outbreaks.

How to determine whether a disease outbreak is milk-borne.

The Public Health Service milk sanitation program.

Definitions used in milk control.

Methods of punishing violations—permit revocation, degrading.

Labeling and placarding.

Inspection procedure.

Laboratory examinations.

Grading procedure.

Detailed discussion of grade A requirements for dairy farms, including construction and operation of barn and milk house, manure disposal, excreta disposal, water supply, utensil construction, cleaning, bactericidal treatment and handling, milking procedure, cooling, bottling and capping, and health examinations.

Detailed discussion of grade A requirements for pasteurization plants, including plant design, excreta disposal, water supply, construction, cleaning, bactericidal treatment and handling of equipment, the pasteurization process, cooling, bottling and capping, and health examinations.

Milk sanitation bookkeeping.

The rating of community milk sheds to determine the extent of compliance with the grade A requirements.

The cost of milk control.

Health officers and milk sanitarians who desire to attend the seminar should advise the Washington State Department of Health at Seattle without delay.

### DIPHTHERIA IMMUNIZATION

During the first part of the month the immunization program in Madera County, which began in January, was continued by the Bureau of Epidemiology. During February 2413 injections was given, 436 of these being in preschool children. In Tulare County a contemplated program had to be postponed because of the prevalence of upper respiratory infection in the schools.

### MANY PROSECUTIONS SUCCESSFUL

The Bureau of Food and Drug Inspections conducted 31 prosecutions in local courts and convictions were obtained in all cases. Most of these covered the sale of sulfanilamide, distilled spirits and "Mickey Finns."

### DAMAGED PRUNES FOR HOG FEED

For about two years a lot of 1000 sacks of fire-damaged prunes has been held in quarantine in a warehouse in Santa Clara County. There has been much litigation over these prunes between the original owner, the consignee and the Prune Prorate to determine ownership and responsibility for same, which were originally a lot salvaged from a warehouse fire in Tulare. However, as a result of a suit held in the superior court in Fresno, it was determined who was the legal owner. With this knowledge, steps were taken for the disposition of the prunes by releasing them to the Prorate, and subsequently they were placed in the hog feed pool.

A lot of fire-damaged prunes were transferred from Redwood City to a plant in Oakland, where they were processed and packed under the supervision of our inspector.

Lots were sampled and examined, with the result that 147,700 lbs. of a 150,000-lb. lot were released, and the balance sent to a hog ranch. The total amount of prunes quarantined at Redwood City was 5,400,000 lbs., leaving 5,250,000 lbs. still to be disposed of in the same manner.

### CRIPPLED CHILDREN EXAMINED

A clinic for crippled children was held February 19th in Imperial County, at which time 124 children were given examination. In San Luis Obispo conferences were held with the health officer and local physicians and the conditions in a number of crippled children were checked.

The chief of the services gave an address upon the work of his organization before the Rotary Club. Sixty persons attended and motion pictures were shown.

Meetings were held with judges of the superior courts and boards of supervisors in both Shasta and Sonoma counties, for the purpose of arranging activities on behalf of crippled children.

### MANY PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES EMPLOYED

A census of public health nurses employed in California has been completed, with the result that 1259 public health nurses were found to be employed in California on January 1, 1940. Of these, 493 are employed in health departments, 519 in departments of education and 27 in other official agencies. Among unofficial agencies, 19 nurses are employed by Red Cross chapters, 5 by tuberculosis associations, 67 by industries, 43 by life insurance companies, 67 by public health nursing associations and 5 in other places.



## MORBIDITY

Complete Reports for Following Diseases for Week Ending  
March 9, 1940

## Chickenpox

628 cases: Alameda County 2, Alameda 5, Albany 1, Berkeley 13, Oakland 40, Piedmont 3, San Leandro 4, Chico 1, Contra Costa County 1, Concord 3, Pittsburg 3, Fresno County 20, Fresno 7, Kingsburg 1, Sanger 3, Kern County 14, Bakersfield 3, Kings County 7, Hanford 6, Los Angeles County 23, Alhambra 4, Burbank 9, Culver City 7, Glendale 6, Huntington Park 1, Long Beach 57, Los Angeles 66, Pasadena 2, South Pasadena 6, Torrance 1, Lynwood 3, South Gate 1, Monterey Park 2, Bell 3, Madera County 5, Modoc County 4, Monterey County 3, Monterey 2, Salinas 7, Orange County 1, Fullerton 1, Newport Beach 5, Seal Beach 6, Laguna Beach 3, Placer County 6, Riverside County 6, Corona 1, Riverside 16, Sacramento County 55, Sacramento 17, Ontario 3, Redlands 1, La Mesa 1, San Diego 9, San Francisco 68, San Joaquin County 1, Lodi 1, Stockton 1, San Luis Obispo County 2, Paso Robles 1, San Luis Obispo 2, Burlingame 6, Daly City 2, San Mateo 2, Santa Barbara 7, Santa Clara County 2, San Jose 8, Santa Cruz County 1, Watsonville 1, Solano County 1, Sonoma County 4, Petaluma 4, Santa Rosa 1, Stanislaus County 4, Sutter County 3, Corning 1, Red Bluff 8, Tulare County 2, Ventura County 5, Santa Paula 1, Yolo County 8, California 1.\*

## Diphtheria

20 cases: Alameda County 1, Butte County 1, Imperial County 1, Calipatria 1, Los Angeles County 2, Los Angeles 3, Sacramento 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 5, Santa Clara 1, Tulare 2, Marysville 1.

## German Measles

18 cases: Albany 1, Berkeley 1, Bakersfield 1, Glendora 1, Long Beach 3, Los Angeles 3, Pasadena 2, La Habra 1, San Clemente 1, Sacramento 1, San Diego 1, San Luis Obispo County 1, Yreka 1.

## Influenza

629 cases: Albany 1, Berkeley 2, Oakland 3, Richmond 4, Fresno County 89, Clovis 12, Kern County 7, Taft 4, Los Angeles County 67, Culver City 1, El Monte 8, Glendale 1, Hermosa 1, Huntington Park 1, Inglewood 1, Long Beach 9, Los Angeles 65, San Marino 1, Maywood 1, Monterey County 1, Fullerton 1, Newport Beach 1, Laguna Beach 3, Sacramento 4, Isleton 1, San Diego County 4, San Diego 1, South San Francisco 7, Santa Barbara County 2, Santa Cruz County 6, Watsonville 39, Sutter County 207, Corning 4, Red Bluff 66, Tulare County 3, Ojai 1.

## Malaria

4 cases: Pasadena 1, Sunnyvale 1, Woodland 1, California 1.\*

## Measles

586 cases: Berkeley 1, Oakland 3, San Leandro 1, Butte County 1, Colusa County 1, Imperial County 6, El Centro 2, Kern County 71, Bakersfield 3, Kings County 5, Hanford 1, Los Angeles County 3, Alhambra 2, Burbank 1, Los Angeles 18, San Fernando 5, Santa Monica 2, Hawthorne 1, Modoc County 25, Monterey County 7, Carmel 3, Monterey 1, Orange County 3, Orange 1, Santa Ana 4, Sacramento County 3, Sacramento 2, Ontario 1, San Diego County 108, Escondido 41, La Mesa 1, National City 10, San Diego 165, San Francisco 3, San Joaquin County 29, Lodi 1, Stockton 3, South San Francisco 1, Santa Clara County 1, Sunnyvale 2, Santa Cruz County 1, Siskiyou County 3, Yreka 4, Solano County 1, Tulare County 12, Tulare 16, Ventura County 1, Ventura 2, Yolo County 2, California 2.\*

## Mumps

487 cases: Alameda County 11, Berkeley 9, Livermore 1, Oakland 8, Butte County 1, El Dorado County 1, Fresno County 17, Clovis 36, Fresno 1, Sanger 1, Kern County 13, Bakersfield 3, Taft 3, Kings County 11, Hanford 9, Lemoore 1, Los Angeles County 40, Alhambra 1, Compton 5, Culver City 1, Long Beach 42, Los Angeles 20, Montebello 1, Pasadena 5, Pomona 1, San Fernando 1, Santa Monica 3, Whittier 1, Lynwood 1, South Gate 1, Monterey Park 1, Gardena 2, Madera County 2, Merced County 3, Orange County 2, Anaheim 1, Fullerton 2, Newport Beach 1, Santa Ana 1, La Habra 1, Riverside 1, Indio 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 63, San Joaquin County 16, Manteca 1, Stockton 10, Tracy 2, San Luis Obispo County 13, San Luis Obispo 1, San Mateo County 4, Redwood City 1, San Mateo 7, Atherton 1, Menlo Park 14, Santa Barbara County 2, Santa Maria 7, Santa Clara County 22, Mountain View 6, Palo Alto 31, San Jose 3, Sunnyvale 1, Siskiyou County 1, Yreka 4, Solano County 1, Santa Rosa 1, Modesto 1, Sutter County 2, Tulare County 4, Ventura 1, Yolo County 4, Yuba County 1.

## Pneumonia (Lobar)

80 cases: Berkeley 3, Oakland 3, Contra Costa County 2, Imperial County 1, Bakersfield 1, Los Angeles County 6, Alhambra 1, Burbank 1, Culver City 1, Los Angeles 31, Redondo 1, San Fernando 1, Santa Monica 1, Sierra Madre 1, Santa Ana 1, Corona 1, Sacramento County 1, Sacramento 2, San Diego 1, San Francisco 7, Lodi 1, Stockton 3, Stanislaus County 2, Oakdale 1, Sutter County 2, Tuolumne County 1, Yolo County 1, Yuba County 2.

\* Cases charged to "California" represent patients ill before entering the state or those who contracted their illness traveling about the state throughout the incubation period of the disease. These cases are not chargeable to any one locality.

## Scarlet Fever

175 cases: Berkeley 1, Oakland 3, Butte County 1, Contra Costa County 1, Pittsburg 1, Richmond 1, El Dorado County 1, Fresno County 2, Humboldt County 1, Imperial County 1, Calexico 1, Kern County 5, Bakersfield 1, Kings County 1, Los Angeles County 14, Alhambra 1, Burbank 1, Glendale 7, Hermosa 4, Huntington Park 1, Long Beach 1, Los Angeles 27, Manhattan Beach 2, Monrovia 4, Pasadena 3, Pomona 2, Redondo 1, Whittier 1, Torrance 2, South Gate 1, Signal Hill 1, Bell 2, Marin County 1, Merced County 2, Merced 1, Pacific Grove 1, Anaheim 1, Fullerton 1, Elsinore 1, Hemet 1, Riverside 1, Sacramento County 2, Sacramento 1, Ontario 1, San Bernardino 1, San Diego County 4, Escondido 2, National City 1, San Diego 3, San Francisco 18, San Joaquin County 3, Lodi 1, San Luis Obispo 3, San Mateo County 2, Redwood City 1, San Bruno 1, Santa Barbara 1, Sierra County 1, Benicia 6, Stanislaus County 3, Modesto 1, Tulare County 1, Porterville 1, Ventura County 3, Ventura 1, Ojai 1, Davis 2, Yuba County 2, California 1.\*

## Smallpox

5 cases: Butte County 2, Chico 3.

## Typhoid Fever

No cases reported.

## Whooping Cough

256 cases: Albany 1, Berkeley 1, Oakland 4, Fresno County 7, Fresno 2, Kern County 25, Bakersfield 5, Kings County 1, Hanford 6, Los Angeles County 7, Long Beach 2, Los Angeles 18, Pasadena 2, Santa Monica 1, Whittier 1, Bell 1, Merced County 2, Anaheim 1, Tustin 2, Riverside County 2, Corona 9, Riverside 9, Sacramento County 2, Sacramento 22, Redlands 3, San Bernardino 5, San Diego County 1, San Diego 4, San Francisco 12, San Joaquin County 5, Stockton 1, Tracy 7, Redwood City 4, Menlo Park 3, Santa Barbara County 4, Santa Barbara 6, Santa Clara County 4, Mountain View 3, Palo Alto 6, San Jose 31, Santa Clara 1, Sunnyvale 2, Watsonville 3, Sonoma County 1, Santa Rosa 5, Modesto 3, Sutter County 2, Tulare County 2, Tulare 1, Yolo County 2, Woodland 1, Yuba County 1.

## Meningitis (Epidemic)

2 cases: Fresno 1, Santa Clara County 1.

## Dysentery (Amoebic)

3 cases: Claremont 1, Los Angeles 1, Stockton 1.

## Dysentery (Bacillary)

3 cases: Sanger 1, Los Angeles County 1, Los Angeles 1.

## Pellagra

3 cases: Oakland 1, Taft 1, Los Angeles 1.

## Poliomyelitis

One case: Oakdale.

## Tetanus

2 cases: Los Angeles 1, Laguna Beach 1.

## Trachoma

18 cases: Kings County.

## Encephalitis (Epidemic)

One case: San Francisco.

## Paratyphoid Fever

2 cases: Riverside 1, Santa Cruz 1.

## Trichinosis

3 cases: Alameda 1, Los Angeles 2.

## Typhus Fever

One case: Los Angeles County.

## Food Poisoning

8 cases: Burbank 3, Laguna Beach 1, San Francisco 4.

## Undulant Fever

6 cases: Humboldt County 2, South Pasadena 1, South San Francisco 1, Santa Clara County 1, Palo Alto 1.

## Coccidioidal Granuloma

2 cases: Kings County 1, Modesto 1.

## Septic Sore Throat

One case: Stanislaus County.

## Epilepsy

27 cases: Oakland 1, Los Angeles County 2, Compton 1, Long Beach 2, Los Angeles 20, Santa Clara County 1.

## Rabies (Animal)

12 cases: Los Angeles County 1, San Diego 1, San Francisco 8, San Mateo 1, Benicia 1.

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